

CLAIMS

1       We claim:

2       1. A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a  
3       user, comprising:

4               (A) a client computer system, wherein said client computer system is a digital  
5               computer;  
6  
7               (B) a local area network connected to said client computer system;  
8  
9               (C) a server computer connected to said local area network to provide a means of  
10              communicating between said local area network and one or more external  
11              communication channels;  
12  
13              (D) a satellite communication channel connected to said server computer by a radio  
14              frequency link; and  
15  
16              (E) an information provider connected to one or more external communication  
17              channels for the purpose of providing information to one or more said client  
18              computer systems.

19       2. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user  
20       as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a personal computer.

21       3. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user  
22       as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a Macintosh computer.

23       4. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user  
24       as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a computer workstation.

25       5. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user

1 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a mini computer.

2 6. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user

3 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a mainframe computer.

4 7. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user

5 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system is a special purpose digital

6 computer.

7 8. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

8 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Windows operating

9 system.

10 9. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

11 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Windows 95 operating

12 system.

13 10. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

14 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Windows NT operating

15 system.

16 11. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

17 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Macintosh operating

18 system.

19 12. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

20 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Unix operating system.

21 13. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,

22 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has a Linux operating system.

1 14. A communication system for communicating between an information provider and a user,  
2 as recited in claim 1, wherein said client computer system has an OS/2 operating system.

3 15. A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a  
4 user, as recited in claim 1, wherein said local area network is a IPX network.

5 16. A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a  
6 user, as recited in claim 1, wherein said local area network is a IP network.

7 17. A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a  
8 user, as recited in claim 1, wherein said information provider is an internet service  
9 provider.

10 18. A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a  
11 user, as recited in claim 1, wherein said information provider is a software distributor.

12 19. A communications system for communicating between an information provider and a  
13 user, as recited in claim 1, further comprising: a modem electrically connected to said  
14 server computer to transmit data electronically to a telephone land line.

15 20. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider  
16 and a user, comprising:  
17 (A) receiving data from said information service provider by a satellite  
18 communications channel; and  
19 (B) conveying said received data across a local area network to one or more digital  
20 computer systems.

21 21. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider  
22 and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:

1 (C) generating a request from said one or more digital computer systems to said  
2 information service provider.

3 22. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider  
4 and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:  
5 (D) conveying said generated request to said information service provider by a land  
6 line communication channel.

7 23. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider  
8 and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:  
9 (D) conveying said generated request to said information service provider by a satellite  
10 communication channel.

11 24. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider  
12 and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:  
13 (D) conveying said generated request to said information service provider by a wireless  
14 communication channel.

15 25. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider  
16 and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising:  
17 (D) conveying said generated request to said information service provider by a routed  
18 communication channel.

19 26. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider and  
20 a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising: receiving data from said satellite  
21 communications channel into computer hardware memory.

22 27. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider and

1 a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising: checking to determine if said received  
2 data has an IP format.

3 28. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider  
4 and a user, as recited in claim 20, further comprising: checking to determine if said  
5 received data has a packetized format.

6 29. A process for asymmetrically communicating between an information service provider  
7 and a user, as recited in claim 20, wherein said one or more digital computer systems are  
8 connected electrically by a local area network.

9 30. A method for controlling the transfer of information between an information service  
10 provider and a user, comprising:

- 11 (A) receiving data from said information service, wherein said received data has a  
12 protocol identifier;
- 13 (B) determining the protocol of said received data; and
- 14 (C) delivering said data according to said protocol of said received data to a client  
15 computer.

16 31. A method for controlling the transfer of information between an information service  
17 provider and a user, as recited in claim 30, further comprising:

- 18 (D) receiving a return packet of data from said client computer.

19 32. A method for controlling the transfer of information between an information service  
20 provider and a user, as recited in claim 31, further comprising:

- 21 (E) delivering said returned packet of data from said client computer to said  
22 information service provider.

1 33. A computer program to manage communications between an information service  
2 provider and a user, comprising:  
3 (A) a routine for receiving information from said information service;  
4 (B) a routine for testing said received information to determine the source of said  
5 information;  
6 (C) a routine for delivering said received information to a digital computer system.

7 34. A computer program to manage communications between an information service  
8 provider and a user, as recited in claim 33, further comprising: a routine for determining  
9 an age value for said received information.

10 35. A computer program to manage communications between an information service  
11 provider and a user, as recited in claim 33, further comprising: a routine for replacing old  
12 received information with newer received information.

13 36. A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and  
14 a user, comprising:  
15 (A) a digital computer system connected to a local area network;  
16 (B) a first interface device for communicating between said local area network and a  
17 satellite communication channel;  
18 (C) a first connection between said satellite communication channel and a source of  
19 information;  
20 (D) a second connection between said land line communication channel and a source  
21 of information; and  
22 (E) a means for controlling the flow of information between said digital computer

1 system and said source of information.

2 37. A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

3 a user, as recited in claim 36 further comprising a second interface device for

4 communicating between said local area network and a land line.

5 38. A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

6 a user, as recited in claim 36 further comprising a second interface device for

7 communicating between said local area network and a wireless channel.

8 39. A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

9 a user, as recited in claim 36 further comprising a second interface device for

10 communicating with said local area network to a satellite.

11 40. A system for managing the communications between an information service provider and

12 a user, as recited in claim 36 further comprising a second interface device for

13 communicating with said local area network to a routed channel.

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